

# Christmas Tree Safety



The holiday season should be a joyous time of the year. However, certain types of fires and injuries associated with holiday decorating are common during this season. A small fire that spreads to a Christmas tree can grow large very quickly.

## PICKING THE TREE

- \* If you have an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled, certified, or identified by the manufacturer as fire-retardant.
- \* Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.

## PLACING THE TREE

- \* Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 1-2" from the base of the trunk.
- \* Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- \* Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- \* Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.

## LIGHTING THE TREE

- \* Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- \* Replace any string of lights that have worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini string sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.
- \* Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- \* Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

## AFTER CHRISTMAS

- \* Get rid of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.
- \* Check with your local community to find a recycling program.
- \* Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.



## FACTS

- \* Christmas trees have caused 8 fires in the past 3 years in Indiana.
- \* These fires caused an estimated \$500,000 in direct property damage.
- \* 48% of home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.
- \* A heat source too close to the tree causes 27% of Christmas tree fires.